

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS AREA PARKS STUDENT CAREER INTAKE PROGRAM (SCIP), YEARS 1 & 2



A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

Prepared by

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In cooperation with

Lowell National Historical Park
Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area
Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center

December 2011

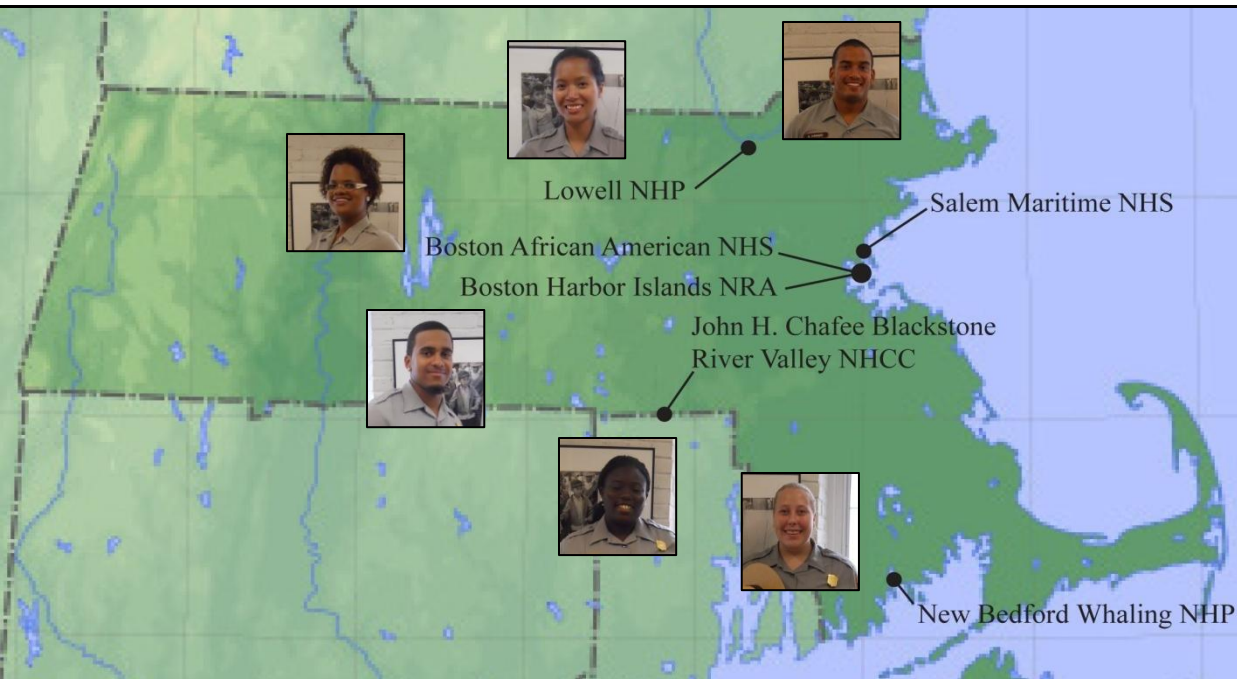


INTRODUCTION TO SCIP

The Massachusetts Parks Student Career Intake Program (SCIP) is an innovative pilot collaboration that relies on a **multi-year approach**. **Students from urban and minority communities** in Massachusetts gain practical work experience in national parks.

College age interns follow a **structured progression of career training and agency immersion** leading to **permanent employment with the NPS**, increasing the diversity of the Service as we move forward in the 21st century.

Meets Director's Goals: Stewardship, Workforce, Relevancy



SCIP is funded through the National Park Service Youth Intern Program (YIP) and program partners include Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, Lowell National Historical Park, and Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center.

INTRODUCTION TO THIS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT



As a pilot effort and the first program of its kind in the NER, **SCIP is designed to be adjusted throughout its first four-year cycle to become a permanent NPS intake program.**

The NPS Conservation Study Institute and Dr. Jennifer Jewiss from the University of Vermont were asked to provide technical assistance and facilitation to begin documenting the SCIP program and building a solid platform for on-going, developmental evaluation as SCIP continues to be implemented in subsequent years.

Project Team:

- Amy Glowacki (LOWE)
- Kelly Fellner (NERO)
- Rebecca Stanfield McCown (CSI)
- Jennifer Jewiss (University of Vermont)

Donna Richardson (formerly of LOWE) and Daniel Laven (formerly of CSI) served on the Project Team in Year 1.

DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION AS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



In developmental evaluations,
the “evaluator is part of the innovation team,
a facilitator and learning coach,
bringing evaluative thinking to the group,
[and is] supportive of the innovators’ values and vision.”

Developmental evaluations often aim to identify
“effective principles that can inform practice
and minimum specifications
that can be adapted to local context.”

Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation

Michael Quinn Patton

Guilford Press (2011), p. 25-26

PHASES 1 & 2 OF THIS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT



PHASE 1

Timeframe: November 2009 – June 2010

Focus areas:

- **Engage key stakeholders in building a draft model of SCIP** that outlines how the program intends to achieve its goals
- **Gather the first cohort's perspectives on their experiences** in Year 1 to inform and illustrate the program model

PHASE 2

Timeframe: September 2010 – December 2011

Focus areas:

- **Gather the first and second cohorts' perspectives on their experiences** in the program's second year of implementation
- **Further illustrate the working draft of the program model** with perspectives shared by participants

BUILDING THE MODEL



In partnership with Institute staff, Dr. Jewiss facilitated **two workshops** at LOWE in December of 2009 and January of 2010.

The **first workshop** convened representatives from participating Massachusetts area parks, partner organizations, and the NPS Northeast Regional Office. In this intensive full-day workshop, SCIP program stakeholders and Institute staff outlined key components of SCIP as the program is currently envisioned. The project team then developed an initial draft of the model based on the material generated during the workshop.

The **second workshop** brought together the first SCIP cohort to gather their feedback on the draft model and their experiences in the program to date. The model was honed based on this feedback and informed by related research the Institute has been conducting on youth engagement efforts in national parks and other special places.

HOW THE MODEL WORKS



The model outlines how the SCIP program is envisioned to work and is organized in the following categories:

Resources needed to carry out the program

- such as staff, partners, participants, funding, and equipment

Activities that are intended to achieve program goals

- such as recruiting participants, training staff, and providing learning opportunities for participants

Outcomes that are expected to result from program activities over time (short-term and long-term)

- such as increased knowledge and skills on the part of participants and others involved in the program, and subsequent changes in people, practices, and organizations

HOW TO READ AND USE THE MODEL



The model is intended to be **read from left to right** and can be **understood as a long “if-then” sentence**: “*If* the program has these resources and uses them effectively to carry out these activities, *then* it is expected that these outcomes will be achieved.”

The model will evolve as more is learned from the SCIP experience. As a result, the model presented here is labeled “**version 1.0**”, and serves as **a living, working model that will change over time**. As with most models, **a program model is a simplified representation of a more complex reality**. For clarity, the model is organized in a linear fashion – although programs rarely operate in a linear manner. For instance:

- additional resources may be accessed and used to support the program as it grows
- activities may be repeated in order to accomplish the intended outcomes
- SCIP is expected to evolve over time as successive cohorts cycle through and the participating parks and neighboring communities continue to change

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES*

- Skilled, committed program manager and program assistant
- Mentors (NPS staff at host sites)
- Training for host parks (cultural competency, youth development)
- “Culturally competent” and committed staff at participating parks
- Network of Mass. parks and their partners
- Feeder programs to generate top-tier candidates
- Cohorts of 4 per year, approximately 16 over 4-year program cycle
- Administrative and HR support (e.g., clarify SCEP process,)
- Field equipment
- Access to transportation
- Regional office guidance and support
- Advisory group
- Sustained funding
- Program communications and marketing

- Recruit to ensure:
 - diverse candidates
 - top-tier applicants
 - clear expectations
- Program management:
 - develop program schedule and manage logistics to provide a broad NPS overview including mission comprehension, career exploration
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- Participants:
 - introduction to National Park System
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 - carry out signature project
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- Create a clear process through which participants move from SCIP to full-time personnel
- Undertake formative evaluation to support continued program development and adaptive program management

PRIMARY INTENDED OUTCOME

- SCIP grads hired into appropriate permanent NPS jobs

ADDITIONAL SCIP PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

- enhanced understanding of NPS
- heightened sense of stewardship
- acquisition of additional leadership skills
- development of peer support network and associated inter-cohort mentoring
- established identity as future NPS leaders
- alumni network created
- further developed and refined career aspirations
- development of professional skills that aligns with career aspirations

ADDITIONAL NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OUTCOMES

- NPS staff becomes more reflective of the surrounding community
- greater understanding of youth culture
- enhanced cultural competency and communication
- increased community engagement and park-community relationship building
- greater sense of responsibility and opportunity to support more diversity in the next generation of the NPS workforce
- secured/dedicated funding
- new positions and career tracks identified that enhance 21st century relevancy
- development of management structures to support program success

*Note: December 2009 workshop participants identified a need to further define SCIP program outcomes.

INTERVIEWS WITH FIRST-YEAR SCIP PARTICIPANTS



Conversational **interviews were conducted with first-year SCIP participants** in Phases 1 and 2. First-year participants were asked to reflect on their experiences in response to open-ended questions such as:

1. How did you **learn about SCIP**? What led you to be interested in the program?
2. If you were talking to someone who was considering applying, how might you **describe the SCIP program**?
3. What have been the **most valuable aspects** of your experience in the SCIP program thus far?
4. To what degree has your **understanding of the National Park Service** increased as a result of your participation in the SCIP program?
5. To what extent do you feel that you've gained **leadership skills** as a result of your participation in the program?



INTERVIEWS WITH SECOND-YEAR SCIP PARTICIPANTS



Interviews were conducted with second-year SCIP participants in Phase 2. The interviews with second-year participants revisited many of the topics discussed the previous year – and included an additional set of questions, such as:

1. What aspects of the program have been most helpful in **supporting your continued participation**?
2. How has your involvement in the SCIP program furthered your **professional and/or personal development**?
3. What **challenges** did you experience during Year 2 of the program?
4. What suggestions would you offer to **improve the program** for future interns?
5. What do you **hope to gain from your participation** by the time you complete the program?



PARTICIPANTS-EYE-VIEW OF SCIP



The interviews focused on certain aspects of the program – **offering a participants-eye-view of SCIP**, along with their **insights about their learning and development**.

In the slides that follow, quotes from the interviews conducted in Phases 1 and 2 are used to illustrate aspects of the model that are highlighted in bold text. Each of the quotes is labeled with the interviewee's cohort and year of participation at the time the interview was conducted.

Cohort Name	First Year of SCIP	Second Year of SCIP
Cohort One C:1	2009—2010 Y:1	2010—2011 Y:2
Cohort Two C:2	2010—2011 Y:1	2011—2012 Y:2

ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES FROM INTERVIEWS



Some of the quotes have been condensed or otherwise edited slightly to enhance clarity and succinctness. In all such instances, care was taken to retain the original meaning and tone of the quoted material. In addition, most individual names used by interviewees were omitted from the quoted material.

The small number of program participants limits the level of thematic analysis that can be conducted on the interview data. Each participant's experiences are unique. However, to the extent possible, the selected quotes represent a shared view of interviewees' perspectives on the program – even though the particular experiences referenced may be unique to the individual.

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



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The role that [the program manager] played was basically like a second mom, because she had to deal with everything. She was the one that made up our schedule for the whole SCIP program. Her position takes a lot of a person – and she was so good to us. [Cohort 1: Year 1]

After the [first summer of the] program was over, [the program manager] still kept in contact with me, asked me how I was doing, and if there is anything she could do to help. She understood and was there to talk. She was very helpful. [C1: Y1]

Amy and Dawn had such high expectations for us, especially being on time, being professional, being organized. They set these standards and we were expected to live up to them. We knew what we had to do. We knew what was expected of us. And it was very clear from the very beginning. [C2: Y1]

Amy and Dawn always gave 100 percent. They had so much energy. Some days you’d be like, oh, this is a long day – and they’d pick you up and get you going again. Amy and Dawn kept everybody positive. They’d have to wake up early, drive people here, pick people up here, make sure everyone got their bus schedule or train schedule, what park we were going to, what we needed for that day. They really kept everything organized and going great. [C2: Y1]

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



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I work a lot with [a staff member who] does administrative stuff for the interp and education division, so I ask her a lot of questions when I have things about payroll or the budget I don't understand. I'd just go knock on her door, ask if she was busy – and if she's not, I sit and talk with her about what I needed to know. She was helpful. If I did anything wrong on payroll, she'd email me and tell me what I did wrong. I also talked a lot with [another administrative staff member]. If I have questions – even if I have other stuff not related to work – I can go to both of them with anything. [C1: Y2]

When I became part of SCIP, I was aiming to improve my interpretive skills. My mentor gave me all these books and research and just let me read. For the first couple of weeks, I read up on the Park Service and the Blackstone River Valley. I learned a lot. Then he gave me the option of putting together my own tour, which I was so excited about. He helped me edit it. It was my own personal tour that I had written. On my first tour, my mentor came – but he wasn't dressed as a Park Service employee – so I was on my own. I had to learn to deal with difficult people and answer questions and keep my cool. After, we talked about what worked, what didn't, what I could improve – and I presented it to him again. ... He told me that he got a lot of feedback from people that it was a great tour, so I grinned. I learned a lot. [C2: Y1]

When I met [the superintendent], I asked if I could shadow him. He made himself very open. I'm able to talk to him about issues I have on the job. He asked me – have I faced any issues or have I seen anything in the park that I was wondering how to handle, because being an employee, there's a certain way we have to act. During the summer, I had several conversations with him. Every time I had questions, he was able to answer them. He was able to take some time and to hear my concern or my thoughts. [C1: Y2]

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Hearing the stories of superintendents and other Park Service employees helped us connect to the Park Service. It helped us connect better to where we were in our personal development and professional development, to help us know what path we needed to take to get to that point. Throughout the process, we each found one person that we absolutely adored in terms of how great they were and how we wanted to emulate them. [C2: Y1]

The electrician I work under definitely would help out a lot. He'd ask me how things are going – if I needed any help with anything – and the facility manager, would also. [C2: Y1]

I asked a coworker if she would be my guinea pig for a tour. She said yes, so sometimes we'd go on a lunch break to the various sites. She would pretend as though she's the visitor and give me feedback on what I need to work on. [C1: Y2]

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RESOURCES



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I've always been an outdoorsy person and I'm into history and how things came to be. I've never been to many National Parks. To know that I was going to go visit all these parks – and not just visit them, but know the inner workings of how they're run, being part of the National Park Service and meeting other people and figuring out what their roles are and how to keep everything running behind the scenes. It sounded really interesting. ... Right before the program started, we all had a meeting to make sure that I was on board. Amy and my boss in my host site were there. They were going to support me 100 percent. They said they'd help support me – and that's exactly what they did. [C2: Y1]

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES

In June, all the participants met for an orientation where we got a big binder filled with information: a schedule of what we'd be doing each week, our transportation, and what parks we would be seeing. That was the first time that all four of us were really together. We were getting to know the people we're going to be spending our summers with. Then we went to our host parks and did a tour, so we got a feel for each participant's host park ... and what each person would be doing when they're at their host park for those two days.

[C1: Y1]

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We went to the kick-off event for all the youth programs at Thompson Island in the Boston Harbor Islands. We met people from all the different programs and did team building, which I really liked because we didn't know each other at all. We did rock climbing and had the people in our program helping each other. When I was done rock climbing, I went over and hugged every one of them. It was so scary. So I think it was good that we start up with the team building exercise. After the team building, we got a little closer – and after the camping. [C1: Y1]

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES

It's one of the best experiences that I've gotten as far as exposure to different resources, because I got to go to different parks that I probably would never have gone to. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. We traveled three days a week. We went to about 15 different parks. [C1: Y1]

I'm from Boston. I had never been to Vermont. That was something. I really like traveling, apparently, which I didn't know until the end of the summer. Every time we left a place, the information was overwhelming. We would talk about the place for the whole ride back. [C1: Y1]

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On Cape Cod we looked at the piping plover's eggs to see how it's camouflaged and why it's so difficult for the park – they had a problem with off-road vehicles. The piping plover blends into their surroundings, so you can kill them and not know it. They lay like four eggs a year. We had a discussion about the Organic Act for the enjoyment of future generations. For some people, the enjoyment is to ride their off-road vehicle on the beach. But for other people, it's looking at the plovers. We discussed how it's hard to balance that out. That left a lasting impression with me. [C1: Y1]

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES

When you go to a National Park, they're telling you a story about the National Park, but you don't hear them tell their story, how they got to be in the National Park. We get to talk to people who actually work at parks – every person we talked to, they love what they do and they've stayed there like 12 years and over. It's interesting to see the passion of what these people do, how they love the National Park, and why they stayed in the National Park Service. [C1: Y1]

We went to Salem. What I found was really cool – we got to do some gold leafing of a sign for a building. We were in the maintenance shop, so we got to meet the painter, the carpenter, some of the grounds people. [C2: Y1]

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For me, the benefit was to see how everything works – not just from a visitor's perspective, but we were treated as if we were co-workers. That speaks volumes. I enjoyed that so much. I had already gotten exposure because of the Island Ambassador Program, but this was a whole different level of exposure. [C1: Y1]

I had this stereotypical view of parks being all woodsy. I had this idea of the Park Service – going for a 20-mile hike, which in some cases, there are parks like that. But I learned that there were normal parks that I could go to and enjoy – that I didn't need to alter who I am to be part of. It was great learning this. And now whenever I travel somewhere, I'm always looking for a national park or a local park, because I feel as though there are all these treasures that nobody knows about. I'm not a big nature person – but I've learned that it doesn't necessarily have to be that extreme. I can find a park that fits my needs that is still interesting, that was beautiful and historical and I learned a lot. [C2: Y1]

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES

[For the kick-off event at Thompson Island] we were given leadership roles in small groups where we led some discussions. It was a great sharing experience. We were the oldest there in terms of youth groups. It was a great experience, because we got to be representatives of what they could achieve. We had worked our way up to this point. [C2: Y1]

They told me that I'd get to wear a uniform and work for the government, so that got me real excited. [C1: Y1]

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The first day was an orientation. All the supervisors were there. Amy spoke as well as other people who headed the SCIP program. We all sat at a table. I felt that I belonged to SCIP because of something I could contribute. When you are given a job based on your personal attributes and things that you can put on the table, it makes you feel more welcomed and special. Being a part of this program made me feel more important and like I had a purpose. [C2: Y1]

The way the site supervisor for Boston African American presented himself intrigued me. So I actually called him one day and was like, "Can I shadow you for a day? I spent a whole day with him. He had to lead meetings. So I got to see hands on how he would present himself in certain situations and how to handle it with calm, collected coolness. Managing time and prioritizing was a definite – and presentation is key. It was a lovely experience. To this day, I still keep him updated with school and how I'm doing and everything. [C2: Y1]

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



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ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES

The Youth Summit was portrayed to us as, take all your experiences and knowledge that you have gained from the summer and you guys are on your own to create this Youth Summit. The theme was to get outside and move – Michele Obama’s campaign. We had weeks to prepare. We spent hours and hours preparing what we were going to say, how we were going to go through it step by step. We each prepared our pieces of information that we were going present. Everyone edits each other’s stuff. We were all very focused. We had to stand up there in front of 200 people in our ranger uniforms – full badge – everything. We look professional. We are professional. We spent the whole summer gaining the knowledge of how to go about presenting. We were so ready for it, and we didn’t even realize we were. We were scared, and it went by so well. [C2: Y1]

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For the youth summit, all the youth programs from the surrounding area came together. The summit is more like a graduation – seeing what the different groups accomplished. ... We actually had to facilitate it. We were like the masters of ceremony, so we had to figure out what to say and what to do. Even though we were traveling and learning, having a big thing like the youth summit that we had to work on towards the end was a good thing. I was in charge of doing the icebreaker. And then we [the 4 SCIP participants] gave a speech of how the day’s events should go. It was pretty intimidating at first, because at the kickoff we were just one of the youth programs, and now we were the leaders – but we enjoyed it. ... I like being in a leadership type of position – that’s what I learned. I want to help, but I like helping in the background, not really do it myself. [C1: Y1]

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES*

I've always wanted to work in the Park Service. SCIP reinforced it – definitely. I finally got my SCEP appointment! It's a very, very long process. It's hard to get into the Park Service – to be a federal employee – even if the park wants you. But I finally got it! This program works – I'm proof of that. I am the result of this program. You can go from a youth program to permanent employee in the National Park Service. [C1: Y2]

PRIMARY INTENDED OUTCOME

- SCIP grads hired into appropriate permanent NPS jobs

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- enhanced understanding of NPS
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ADDITIONAL NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OUTCOMES

- NPS staff becomes more reflective of the surrounding community
- greater understanding of youth culture
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- greater sense of responsibility and opportunity to support more diversity in the next generation of the NPS workforce
- secured/dedicated funding
- new positions and career tracks identified that enhance 21st century relevancy
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***Note: December 2009 workshop participants identified a need to further define SCIP program outcomes.**

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OUTCOMES*

I thought that I knew a lot [about the National Park Service], but in reality I knew like 2 percent. There are 391 sites, and I had only been to one. After my first year in the SCIP program, I felt that I was at about 65 percent – so who knows what I’m going to learn next summer. It’s an overwhelming amount of education. [C1: Y1]

Before doing the SCIP program, I just knew interpretation. I didn’t know about the environmental side [or] the education side. I didn’t know there were so many other aspects of a park. SCIP broadens your horizon if you are looking to be part of the Park Service. ... It gave you hands-on experience. You see behind the scenes. [C1: Y1]

The biggest thing I’ve found out about the Park Service is that professionally, no matter what your interest, there is a job for you. Before, I thought the Park Service was just interpreters, but there are so many different professions. There are so many different people that make it work. I never thought of that career opportunity. I learned you could get a Park Service job that fits your interests and your goals in life – that was a big thing for me. [C2: Y1]

We went on tours and learned the history of why those parks were created. There are certain things that make each park unique. Each park has a theme. We were very well aware by the end of the summer that each park was created for a specific purpose and each park is for preservation and the enjoyment of all people – and that in itself is kind of tricky. How can you preserve something and also let people enjoy it? [C2: Y1]

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ADDITIONAL SCIP PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

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- established identity as future NPS leaders
- alumni network created
- further developed and refined career aspirations
- development of professional skills that aligns with career aspirations

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- NPS staff becomes more reflective of the surrounding community
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- secured/dedicated funding
- new positions and career tracks identified that enhance 21st century relevancy
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***Note: December 2009 workshop participants identified a need to further define SCIP program outcomes.**

SCIP PROGRAM MODEL, VERSION 1.0



RESOURCES



ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES*

I think my leadership skills increased. I learned tactics to deal with certain things, and I started thinking in a certain way. I learned how to work with people – to compromise. [C1: Y1]

I liked working with the Spindle City program. I gained some leadership experience about how to manage the kids, mostly by watching how the other leaders interacted with the kids and what they do. Sometimes the kids get tired; they don't want to work any more. So we'd say, "It's only five more minutes, and then we can take a two-minute break." [C1: Y1]

I definitely learned that, in a group, we all need to work together. Sometimes leadership means stepping back and observing – not being the talker or the one in front. Because by doing so, you are leading in the sense of letting others talk, too. [C2: Y1]

Before SCIP started officially in the summer, I had to do an outdoor leadership training with the Appalachian Mountain Club. I backpacked for 5 days. That was a whole different experience. It was a lot of fun but it was a different type of work, because I had to carry about 30-40 pounds and hike for hours. We switch off roles. Every half-day we have a new leader. I was the last one to lead the whole group. I was not happy because I had just slipped and fell. Then, next thing you know, the people that were in charge of the program said, "Now it's your turn to lead." I was like – what? – I just fell. My hand still hurts, and you want me to lead? I learned that if you're a leader, it doesn't matter how you're feeling. You still need to lead. [C1: Y2]

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OUTCOMES*

I'm not very outspoken. I have a fear of talking in front of people. We [the SCIP interns] always pick each other up. During the Youth Summit, they helped boost my confidence to go up there on stage and talk in front of the couple hundred kids that were out there. [C2: Y1]

As the summer went on, we grew up a lot. There were times when people were tired and others had to have the weight on their shoulders, but we all understood. We were all doing the same thing for the same reason, and we worked so well together. Having people there for you, having that communication and support, was a huge part of why I believe that SCIP was successful. [C2: Y1]

The SCIP 2's knew what they were doing. They had been through it, so they helped us out. They really calmed our fears from the very beginning, because we didn't know what we were getting into. [C2: Y1]

The new SCIP participants were very eager and had a lot of questions. I was able to answer a few questions – to guide them, in a sense. This was all new. They didn't know what to expect or how to do certain things. One of them was saying how it's completely different from staying in their host park where they grew up in the YCC program – now they're venturing out to all these different parks. "What should I ask? What behavior is appropriate?" We were being models in a sense. [C1: Y2]

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ACTIVITIES



OUTCOMES*

Whatever park we went to, we had a discussion with the superintendent or someone in charge. They were very instrumental in teaching us lessons that we took with us in how we present ourselves and how we can make this into a career. They shared their personal stories and their struggles. It made all those high-and-mighty superintendents seem human and something that was achievable to us. [C2: Y1]

My mentor just got [the position of] Chief of Interpretation and Education. He's the person I look at and see myself being. Hopefully, one day, I may be a Chief of Interpretation and Education at some park. [C2: Y1]

[Before SCIP], I'd been with the park for three summers. To me, it was always a fun summer job. I never actually thought that I'd work here – and now I really do want to have a career with the National Park Service. I never thought that far before. It was always a summer interpretation job, and my major in college was business administration. So I didn't see how it actually clicked until trying to get into the Park Service through the SCIP program as a budget technician. ... Everyone [we talked to] is so excited about the National Park Service. They have so much passion for it, and I want to take that with me. It's interesting – you can change your career, but still stay in the Park Service. A lot of people jump from park to park. That's appealing. I'm not just stuck in one place. I can jump around. I really want to stay with the National Park Service. It's not just a summer job any more. I want it to be my career. [C1: Y1]

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I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I just didn't understand what kind of teaching I would like to do, what grade level, even the subject area. Now, working for the Park Service, I realize that I don't need to be in a classroom setting in order to teach, and that by teaching in the Park Service I can hit a bigger audience. I see myself being in the National Park Service as a career. [C2: Y1]

At some point in my career in the National Park Service, I want to be what Amy is – a youth program coordinator. Being in SCIP, that's experience with youth programs. If I was a youth program coordinator, I can tell them, "I did this before, and now here I am, and I want to help you have the same type of experience I did." [C1: Y2]

SCIP definitely got me more interested [in a Park Service career]. I love the Park Service. I definitely feel like it's for me. It's a great atmosphere. It's not like your typical 9-to-5 job where you punch in, punch out, just try and make it through the day. Everyone you talk to really loves their job. [C2: Y1]

I felt that my interests could be incorporated into the Park Service. I have always wanted to go to law school; I've always wanted to do something in law. But by learning about the Park Service, I know I can do environmental law or a position that I could use to help the Park Service and combine my love of history and my love of law. [C2: Y1]

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OUTCOMES*

I gained more confidence. I'm looking at what I need to be successful in interpretation. This is my personal goal: by the time I'm 35, I'm hoping to be the head of interpretation in a park – so I'm going to need those attributes to be successful. [C1: Y1]

A facility manager from Boston showed me what he does on his spreadsheets. I was pretty amazed, because budget stuff is my area of interest. I got a lot from him with his Excel style. [C1: Y1]

I'm a historian of the Blackstone River Valley. I have learned a lot about the area. I learned to be a better interpreter – what resources to use and where to find those resources. [C2: Y1]

Every two weeks I do payrolls on the seasonals. The most difficult is the folk festival payroll with all the overtime. I learned a lot of administrative stuff, and I learned that it's okay to ask questions when you don't understand. [C1: Y2]

I'm learning so much more about electrical. Every day is a different experience. My boss is giving me responsibility to go to the store, purchase an order, and get the job done. We had to create a temporary front desk for a visitors center, and I was in charge of that. I had to move the desk, reroute all the communication wires so they could have a computer, telephone, credit card, lighting, and electricity. We were in a bit of a time crunch, too. The visitors center had to be open Tuesday. So I had to get everything done on Monday. We had a deadline to meet. It was my responsibility to make sure it got done. [C2: Y1]

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CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE USE OF LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FIRST 2 YEARS OF THE SCIP EXPERIENCE



Small number of participants

- Starting with a small number of participants provides a strategic way to learn from pilot efforts before expanding the program. At the same time, is important to keep in mind that the **lessons learned so far are based on the experiences of just 7 participants** and thus may not be representative of the broader pool of potential YIP participants.

Ethical considerations

- The visibility of the small number of young, diverse participants and the employment-based objective of the program require sensitivity on the part of NPS staff and partners. It is important to recognize that SCIP **participants are under a “big spotlight”** as we collectively learn how to diversify the NPS workforce. The participants’ feedback on the program is essential – and at the same time, they are being asked to comment on parts of the NPS system in which they hope to gain permanent employment.

Early developmental phase of the program

- SCIP is designed as a multi-year experience. This report presents lessons learned from the 1st and 2nd years of that experience. Please stay tuned as the program progresses and “the rest of the story unfolds.” These **early insights will evolve as more is learned about the SCIP experience in coming years** – particularly regarding the program’s longer-term influence on participants’ lives and to the NPS system.



IMPLICATIONS FOR SHARING LESSONS LEARNED



As a pilot program, **SCIP is intended to generate learning that will inform further program development** for the participating MA area parks and share lessons learned with others throughout NPS.

The model and illustrating quotes are designed to be accessible to and easily shared with wider audiences. The current working model, version 1.0, documents and distills SCIP **stakeholders' collective vision** of how the program is intended to work. The accompanying quotes illustrate **participants' perspectives** based on involvement in the program.

The current model can serve as a **program development and design tool to be refined over time**. In addition, the model provides an important **foundation for future evaluation efforts** as the program continues to be implemented and further evidence is available to assess progress toward the stated outcomes.



NEXT STEPS: PHASE 3



The next phase of this technical assistance project will:

- ① **Engage program stakeholders in a facilitated workshop to consider lessons learned about SCIP to date and revisions to the model** that are needed to reflect the current workings of the program.
- ② **Gather additional input from participants from the first and second cohorts** who have remained affiliated with SCIP during the program's third year of implementation. These participants' perspectives will be used to further hone and illustrate the model.
- ③ **Incorporate SCIP implementation data into the model to describe selected program elements** – such as the participating network of parks and partners and park sites visited by interns.
- ④ **Develop brief “case studies”** highlighting the most illustrative experiences shared by the 5 participants from the first and second SCIP cohorts.



FOR MORE INFORMATION



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We encourage you to share information from this report and request that the following citation be referenced:
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